(c) whether a delegation from the UAE visited India in July, 2003 and had discussions with various leaders including the Deputy Prime Minister; and

(d) if so, to what extent it has helped to improve the relations between the two Countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (c) India and the United Arab Emirates held the first meeting of a strategic dialogue between the two countries during a visit by a high level delegation from the UAE led by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Chief of Staff of UAE Armed Forces from June 30—July 1, 2003. The discussions covered issues of bilateral, regional and international interest including cooperation in areas of trade and investment, industry, defence and security. It was agreed that the strategic dialogue would be institutionalized to take place annually. An agreement on defence cooperation was signed during the visit. His Highness Sheikh Mohammed called on President, PM, DPM, EAM and RM during the visit.

(d) The institution of a strategic dialogue, the signing of a defence agreement and the wide ranging discussions held during the visit reflects a new level of cooperation between the two countries and their intention to deepen and intensify it for mutual benefit.

China border issue

1273. SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and China have fixed terms for China border issue;

(b) if so, whether India has proposed the National Security Adviser to be the Special Representative and China has also appointed their representative to have talks between two Countries;

(c) whether both Countries will be able to develop economy and reduce tension on borders and improve cultural and other activities;

(d) if so, whether work on the projects of reaching agreements on border disputes have been worked out and initiatives taken; and

(e) if so, whether after agreements reached, India is hopeful of speedy border settlement between two Countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (e) In the Declaration on Principles for Relations and Comprehensive Cooperation issued on June 23, 2003 during Prime Minister's visit to China, India and China agreed that pending an ultimate boundary settlement, the two countries would work together to maintain peace and tranquillity in their border areas and continue to implement the agreements signed for this purpose. India and China also agreed to each appoint Special Representative to explore from the political perspective of the overall bilateral relationship the framework of a boundary settlement. The National security Adviser has been appointed the Special Representative from the Indian side. China has appointed its Executive Vice Foreign Minister as his counterpart.

Both India and China have agreed to qualitatively enhancing the bilateral relationship at all levels and in all areas while addressing differences through peaceful means in a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable manner.

Nation-wide strike by workers

1274. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the working class went on a nation-wide strike on the 21st May, 2003;

(b) if so, the details of the demand raised by the workers.

(c) whether Government offered effective measures to redress the grievances of the striking workers in order to avert strike;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.